



## Community Action Responds in Pandemic

Updated 2022

### Agencies Shift to Meet Changing Needs

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the public health and economy of the world; however, the impacts have not been experienced equitably across society. **People with low incomes and communities of color have experienced the most negative health and economic outcomes**, and continue to recover economically slower than their middle- and upper- income neighbors. While COVID did not create these inequities, it exacerbated them. Minnesota's **Community Action Agencies (CAAs) have been working nonstop since the start of the pandemic to mitigate some of these inequities** and to ensure their program participants remain healthy and have the necessary social and economic supports. **CAAs will continue to play a vital role beyond the pandemic** to ensure Minnesotans with lower incomes have the services and supports needed to recover equitably.

#### Housing Assistance

COVID-19 did not cause the housing crisis, but it has made it worse. In addition to **more people facing housing instability**, people experiencing homelessness often live in congregate spaces with limited opportunities to isolate. To meet these needs, some **CAAs have worked with local hotels to secure safe isolation spaces**. And, across the state, CAAs have worked diligently to **provide federal, state and county emergency rental assistance**.

#### Social Support & Technology Assistance

Researchers estimate that feelings of depression and anxiety have **increased** by 20-30% during the pandemic, especially among older adults, people with disabilities, and people who are immunocompromised. To mitigate this isolation, **CAAs have provided tablets, Wi-Fi hotspots, and technology training** to ensure these groups can safely attend appointments virtually, grocery shop online, and stay connected with family and friends.

#### Emergency Food Assistance & Distribution

Throughout the pandemic, **1 in 8 Minnesotans have struggled to purchase food**, and households of color were three times as likely as white households to report not having enough to eat. **CAAs quickly pivoted congregate dining to meal delivery or pick-up programs**. CAAs also assisted families with children in enrolling in federal and state food benefit programs.

### About Community Action

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 created the Community Action Network of national and local organizations that connect millions of people, with low and moderate incomes, to essential services. The network works to build community resiliency and self-sufficiency, including removing systemic and structural barriers to move people out of poverty. In Minnesota, 24 Community Action Agencies and 11 Tribal Nations serve all 87 counties, providing poverty solutions with equitable access to various services: homeless prevention and housing assistance, utility bill assistance, healthcare enrollment, food and nutrition services, Head Start early childhood programming, financial asset building, regional transit, and more.

- CAAs directly paid out over **\$15 million of the MN COVID Housing Assistance Program** between August and December 2020
- Some CAAs' food shelves experienced more than a **200% increase in need** during the pandemic

[Read More >> White Paper on CAA's COVID Response](#)

## 24 Local Agencies & 11 Tribal Governments

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### MinnCAP Leadership

**MinnCAP Executive Director**

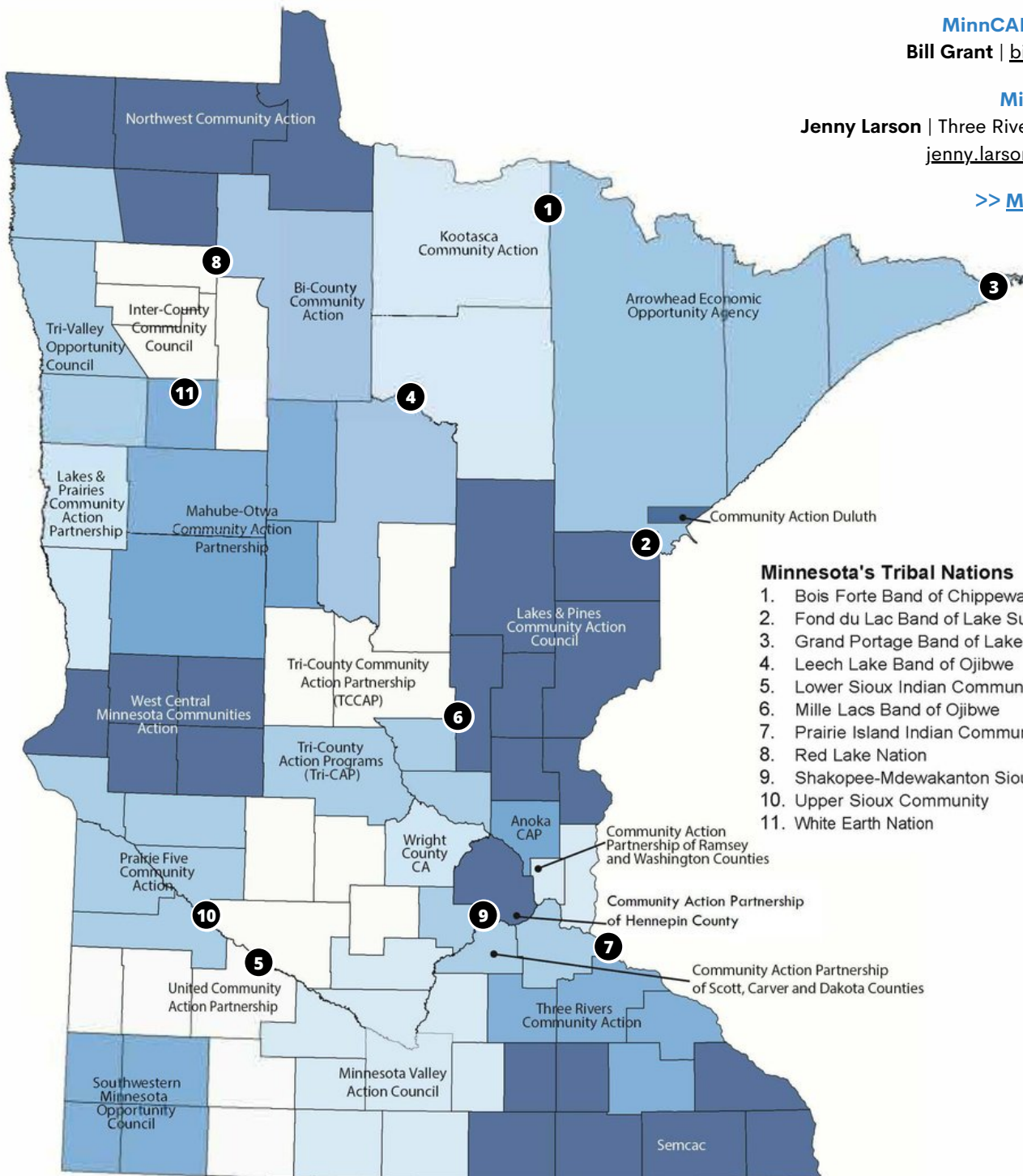
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### Minnesota's Tribal Nations

1. Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
2. Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior
3. Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior
4. Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
5. Lower Sioux Indian Community
6. Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
7. Prairie Island Indian Community
8. Red Lake Nation
9. Shakopee-Mdewakanton Sioux Community
10. Upper Sioux Community
11. White Earth Nation

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